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1,000 REPORTED SEXUAL ASSAULTS IN THE MILITARY THIS YEAR
metroNEWS

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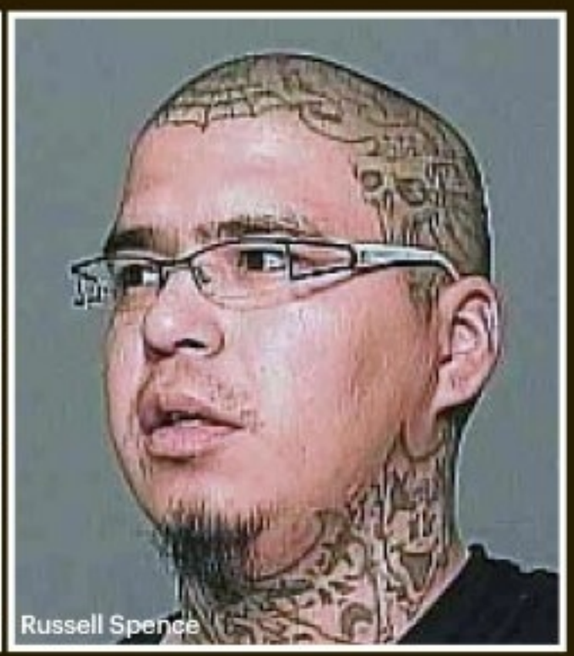
'WE'RE ALL HUMAN'

Hollie Hall

Robert McAdam

Errol Greene


Russell Spence

Families of inmates who died at the Winnipeg Remand Centre are still waiting for answers, as advocates push for a broader inquest **metroNEWS**

Drivers stall on 'zipper merging'

TRAFFIC

Report shows even signs didn't ease congestion at road closures

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

A new report at city hall confirms what many Winnipeg drivers already know: Many of us seem wholly confused with — or dismissive of — zipper merging.

The city's public works department launched a zipper merge pilot back in 2015 at two sites on Lagimodiere Boulevard and Bishop Grandin Boulevard.

Simply put, a zipper merge is when drivers in multiple lanes approach a road closure, which is usually at a construction site, and take turns merging into a single lane.

Even with electronic signage installed at the two pilot sites, traffic manager Luis Escobar writes in a new report that it had a minimal effect on traffic congestion as drivers weren't too quick to pick up on zipper merging.

"It appears that the ineffectiveness is related, in part, to the absence of specific education as to how drivers should merge at a construction lane closure," he writes.

"The next step will be to approach Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) to gauge the level of interest in exploring specific education relative to merging in construction zones."

Escobar's analysis is based off video evidence from the test sites, which was collected to monitor the behaviour of drivers.

> "The ineffectiveness is related, in part, to the absence of specific education."
> Luis Escobar

The report also says it cost the city around $8,300 to install electronic signage at both locations for the 14-day and 36-day trial periods in 2015.

It was St. Boniface Coun. Matt Allard's idea to try zipper merging as a means of easing traffic at construction zones.

The infrastructure renewal and public works committee will discuss the report on Tuesday.

City hit with poor grade

BUDGET

Improvement needed to financial reporting

Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

A recent C. D. Howe Institute report gave Winnipeg a failing grade for approving its last budget after the fiscal year end, and for providing "little information in reader-friendly form." LYLE STAFFORD/METRO

As Winnipeg works through its 2017 budgeting process, a major think-tank has given the city a failing grade on its financial reporting practices.

A recent C. D. Howe Institute report on the fiscal accountability of Canada's major cities gave Winnipeg an 'F' for approving its last budget after the fiscal year end, and for providing "little information in reader-friendly form."

"Key totals are buried deep in their documents," the report asserts. "Winnipeg does not present a reconciliation table at all (and) also presents its tax-supported and rate-supported budgets separately, which understates the overall size of the city's fiscal impact."

Winnipeg's budget approval was 11 weeks late, with total figures of operating and capital expenses first appearing on pages 31 and 48 of 287, respectively.

The City of Winnipeg disagrees with the report.

"The City follows accepted professional practices and guidelines, including generally following budgeting standards prescribed by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)," reads an emailed statement from David Driedger, manager of corporate communications.

Further, the statement reads, Standard and Poor bases its AA credit rating partly on the city's "strong financial management, noting the City's transparent and easy-to-access disclosure to pertinent information."

But one Winnipeg councillor and former finance chair Coun. Russ Wyatt agreed with the pointed criticism, adding that more than being "quite accurate," the C.D. Howe conclusion is actually "putting it lightly."

"I would have given us an F-minus," Wyatt said.

He explained how the criticism of burying key numbers is fair, adding, "there has been less and less information being presented to council and to the public" during, leading up to, and following budget deliberations.

Both the think tank report and Wyatt also pointed out that the presentation of totals in Winnipeg's budget documents could be improved, with C.D. Howe recommending a switch to gross revenue and spending figures from net totals.

Wyatt said the final numbers presented are a "smoke screen in the existing budget."

He said he'd like to see improved presentation of spending breakdowns "based on allocation to each department."

Besides taking issue with the financial reporting, Wyatt thinks the city's whole budget process should be revamped.

"We are still concentrating on the one-year budget without much work going into future years, we really should be moving to a five-year cycle ideally, where you prove the one year coming, but start working on balancing the (coming) years," he said. "That would require a lot of work, but it's something we should be moving towards ... I don't think we have any choice when it comes to finding efficiencies and savings.

"The sooner we roll up our sleeves and address these challenges, the better off we'll be as a city."

REVENUE

Water and sewer rates to go up

Stephanie Taylor
Metro | Winnipeg

Winnipeg households will pay an average $100 more on their water and sewer bills in 2017.

This should be no surprise to homeowners — the increase is one of three years worth of rate hikes councillors approved in the 2016 budgets.

This year, homeowners saw their rates go up by 9.2 per cent — or an extra $23-$32 on each quarterly bill. Next year, they will go up by 8.9 per cent and then 7.4 per cent in 2018. That's per the average household of four people.

Moira Geer, the acting director of the water and waste department, said the city expects a $15-million increase in revenue next year due to the rate increases. Last March, councillors heard that higher rates would help pay for the nearly $1-billion worth of required upgrades to the city's four sewage treatment plants.

This year, the water and sewer dividend payment remains at 12 per cent and increases from $32 million to $35 million.

The cash will be funnelled into general revenue. In 2016, former finance chairman Coun. Marty Morantz said those funds went towards road repairs.

"You gotta do the math here. If you are standing out there claiming we shouldn't have the dividend, OK, but then you gotta suck it up and give us your plan on how to pay for this," said committee chairman Coun. Brian Mayes. "You're cutting a hole in the budget."

With no shortage of capital projects to pay for, Mayes says he is planning to sit down with Mayor Brian Bowman and chief administrative officer Doug McNeil to decide on how to make their funding needs clear to the province.

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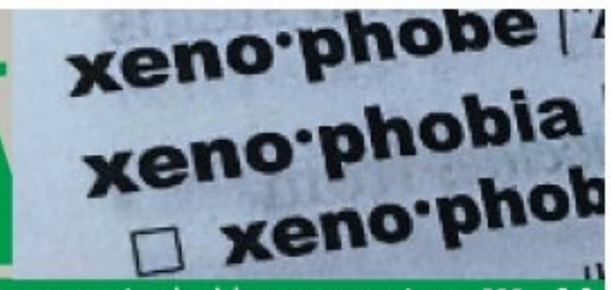


Dictionary.com's word of the year is darkly appropriate. **World**

Cash needed at Standing Rock: Activist

PROTEST

With stretched resources, money, not people wanted

Jessica Botelho-Urbanski
For Metro | Winnipeg

If you think the best way to help water protectors at Standing Rock is to join them in North Dakota, a Winnipeg activist asks you to think again.

Andrew Vineberg, a climate justice advocate who volunteers with the Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition and studies at the University of Winnipeg, visited the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation two weeks ago.

He said organizers there told him and friends to relay back to their networks the need for financial donations, not more bodies in the camps.

"It's definitely a message that is contrary to what people have been getting up to this point and it speaks to the … challenges that the camps have before them in terms of balancing the needs of communicating with the outside world, and also dealing with all of their needs and their work being on the ground," Vineberg said.

If you do plan to visit the main Oceti Sakowin camp, prepare to be bundled for winter and entirely self-sufficient, Vineberg said, adding that visitors are still welcome, but shouldn't depend on the camp's finite resources.

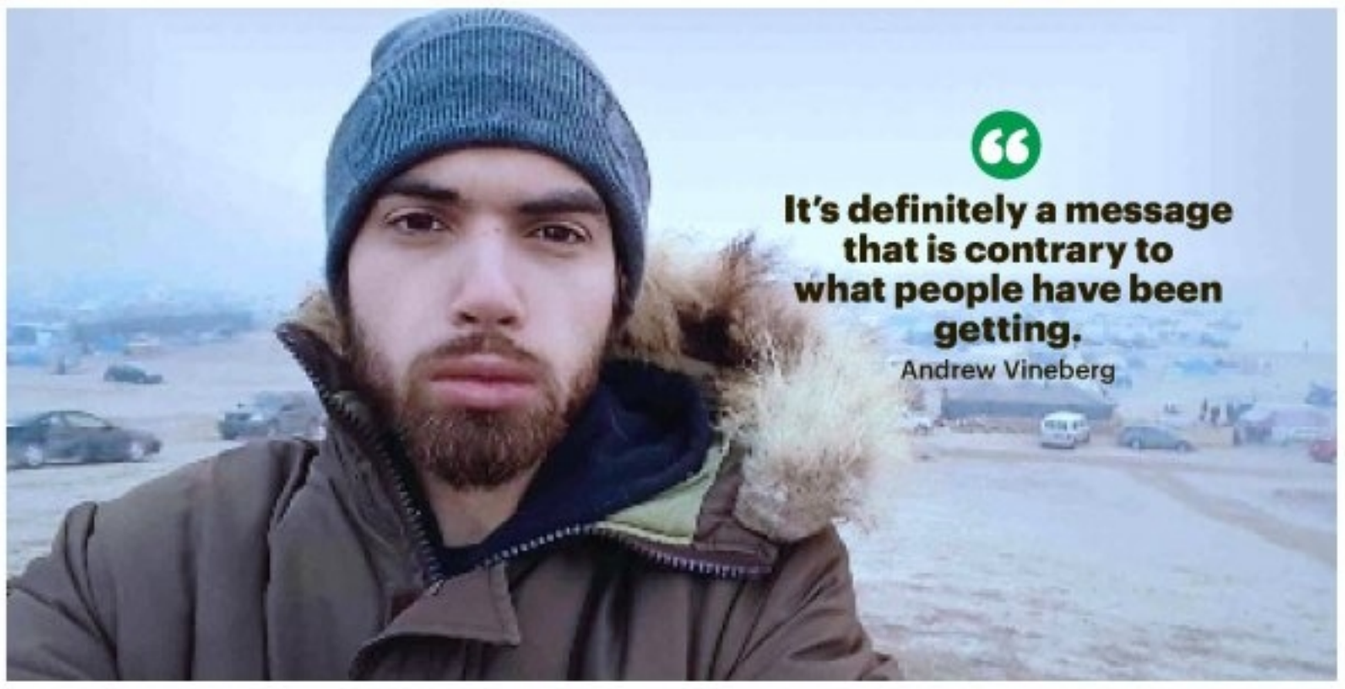
Thousands have camped near the proposed site of the Dakota Access pipeline since April in an effort to peacefully protest the construction of the pipeline, which would disrupt traditional indigenous burial grounds and could pollute the area's water supply, protesters say.

Vineberg said the demonstrators are trying to protest peacefully, but reports and images disseminating on social media have shown confrontations at the front lines where police fired water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets into the crowds.

On Monday, Jack Dalrymple, the governor of North Dakota, ordered a mandatory evacuation of the land managed by the army and occupied by the pipeline protesters "to safeguard against harsh winter conditions." Previously, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said it hoped for a peaceful transition from the current camps to a new "free speech site" south of the Cannon Ball River.

Vineberg said the best way to show support for Standing Rock right now is to donate money, whether online via PayPal, GoFundMe or Fundrazr; or by mail to Oceti Sakowin Camp, P.O. Box 298, Cannon Ball, ND 58528.

At least two benefit concerts in support of Standing Rock are happening in Winnipeg over the next week — one on Thursday at the Times Change(d) and another on Sunday at the Good Will Social Club.



Andrew Vineberg visited Standing Rock Sioux Reservation two weeks ago.
SUPPLIED/ANDREW VINEBERG

WINNIPEG REMAND CENTRE

Families and advocates call for inquest into prisoners' deaths

Hollie Hall, Errol Greene, Robert McAdam, Russell Spence and an unnamed man.

All have died while in provincial custody at the Winnipeg Remand Centre within the last nine months.

Their families await answers from internal reviews about why their loved ones died, though some prisoner advocates have called for an overarching inquest to determine whether systemic problems may have contributed to the deaths.

In an effort to keep the conversation going — and the victims' names top of mind — prisoner advocacy group Bar None and Prison Visiting Rideshare Manitoba are organizing a panel discussion Wednesday evening at the Circle of Life Thunderbird House from 7 to 9 p.m.

Cecil James, a band councillor from Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, will be among the five panelists to speak.

James lost his 35-year-old sister, Kinew James, after she died of heart failure due to complications from diabetes while in custody at the Regional Psychiatric Centre in Saskatoon on Jan. 20, 2013.

"My sister, she was a mother, she was an auntie. Some of the people here like Errol Greene, he was a husband, he was a father, he was a son, a brother. We're all human and at the end of the day, we have to try and take care of each other," he said. "Especially when it's somebody's job. They shouldn't be trying to shy away from the responsibilities."

Besides his sister's story, James will also talk about how deaths in custody are dealt with differently by jurisdiction and the systemic failures of the prison system.

He pointed to the lack of action after the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry's findings were released in 1999 as a glaring mistake.

"Very little has changed," James said. "Aboriginal people are still overly represented in corrections and I don't know, it's hard to say (why).

"I know the families will want their own answers (from internal reviews), but this continues to be a systematic problem."

According to Statistics Canada's most recent data, Indigenous adults represent about 25 per cent of admissions into provincial corrections' facilities in Canada, while constituting about three per cent of the adult population.

JESSICA BOTELHO-URBANSKI/FOR METRO

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The Riveters, a folk band from Saskatoon, Sask., take their inspiration from feminist icon Rosie the Riveter. CONTRIBUTED

Dropping f-word with folky '40s flair

MUSIC

Feminist folk band on tour to promote their latest album

Meg Crane
For Metro | Winnipeg

Rosie and the Riveters are coming to Winnipeg for some good, clean fun — with an f-word thrown in.

The folk band with 1940s flair consider themselves to be a feminist group, choosing to sing about what they love rather than heartbreak and donating 20 per cent of their merchandise sales to women working to better their communities around the globe.

"There's a strong consciousness coming towards what feminism really is and that's that men and women are equal and deserve the same equal opportunities," said Allyson Reigh, one of the four band members.

She admits that sometimes people are put off by the Riveters using "the f-word" to define themselves.

Since the four current members came together in 2011, they have performed more than 150 shows across Canada and the United States. They've also been showcased in several events, including Folk Alliance International, JunoFest and Folk Music Canada.

Now, they're touring to promote their album, Good Clean Fun.

Despite their growing popularity, Reigh said she still considers fellow Riveters Alexis Normand, Melissa Nygren and Farideh Olsen to be friends before they're bandmates and business partners.

"It's really joyful being up on stage with four other really great musicians and strong women and strong friends," Reigh said.

Olsen thinks the audience can feel this.

"We definitely see people cry. We see people laugh. I mean, our whole intention is that people come into the show and they leave a little lighter," Olsen said.

One of the highlights of 2016 so far for Reigh was performing at the Winnipeg Folk Festival, so she's excited to come back to Manitoba for a show at The Park Theatre on Nov. 29.

Tickets are $20 through myparktheatre.com and at Music Trader.

> "It's really joyful being up on stage with four other really great musicians. Allyson Reigh

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Sex-assault survey disturbs top brass

MILITARY

Landmark poll shows nearly 1,000 reports in just one year

Nearly 1,000 members of Canada's military say they've been sexually assaulted in the past year, according to a landmark survey.

Women in Canada's military remain the target of sexual assaults, unwanted sexual touching, inappropriate sexual innuendo and jokes. One in 60 regular force members say they've been sexually assaulted in the last year, mostly unwanted sexual touching, but also attacks and sexual activity without consent.

That works out to about 1.7 per cent of regular forces personnel, higher than the comparable rate of 0.9 per cent for the general population. In an especially disturbing revelation, almost one-third of women in uniform say they've been the victim of a sexual assault since they enlisted.

Some 43,000 members responded to the voluntary survey between April and June, and the findings will serve as a benchmark in what promises to be a regular survey.

Gen. Jonathan Vance, the chief of defence staff, said Monday the findings confirm his decision to launch OP Honour, the military-wide initiative to stamp out misconduct and improve workplace culture, as one of his first acts upon taking command in July 2015. But especially troubling for Vance and his top commanders is that inappropriate behaviour has continued after the launch.

Vance renewed his pledge that the military will seek out perpetrators. He said that 30 supervisors and higher rank members have been removed from command because of misconduct and Vance bluntly said they wouldn't be missed if they left entirely.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Gen. Jonathan Vance addresses a survey on sexual misconduct in the armed forces. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

BROADCASTING

CBC asking feds for $400M to go ad-free

The CBC is asking for an increase of roughly $400 million in government funding to go ad-free on all platforms.

A proposal paper posted to the national broadcaster's website outlines how the CBC/Radio-Canada wants to follow the example of the BBC, Britain's national broadcaster, and be fully funded by the federal government instead of partially relying on ad revenue.

The CBC "has always been funded at a per person level that is significantly lower than … almost all other comparable public broadcasters," the paper notes, pointing out that the BBC receives $114 per citizen while the CBC only gets $34.

The paper proposes a $12 increase to bring the amount it receives from each Canadian to $46, a price it says is "still well below comparable countries."

"The BBC offers a compelling example of how a strong, stable, well-funded public broadcaster can serve the interests of domestic audiences and diverse communities, support the global ambitions of its creative and cultural sectors, and provide a strong foundation for Britain's creative economy," the paper says.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CANADA NEWS

Justin Trudeau to skip Castro memorials

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office says he won't have time to attend any memorial for the late Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Instead, Trudeau has dispatched Governor-General David Johnston.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Air Force pilot dies in fighter-jet crash

The pilot of a CF-18 fighter jet that crashed near the Alberta-Saskatchewan border has died. The Air Force said the fighter was based out of Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake in northeastern Alberta.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DICTIONARY.COM

Word of year sign of times

You might have thought about it, heard it. A lot. You might have even felt it: Dictionary.com's word of the year is "xenophobia."

It's clear that in 2016, fear of "otherness" bruised the collective consciousness around the globe.

The Brexit vote, police violence against people of colour, Syria's refugee crisis, transsexual rights and the rise of Donald Trump in the U.S. presidential race were among prominent developments that drove debate — and spikes in lookups — of the word, said Jane Solomon, one of the site's lexicographers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

University attack may be terrorism

OHIO STATE

Man killed by police 'may have been self-radicalized'

A Somali-born Ohio State University student plowed his car into a group of pedestrians on campus and then got out and began stabbing people with a butcher knife Monday before he was shot to death by an officer. Police said they are investigating whether it was a terrorist attack.

Eleven people were hurt, one critically.

The attacker was identified as Abdul Razak Ali Artan. He was born in Somalia and was a legal permanent U.S. resident, according to a U.S. official.

The details emerged after a morning of confusion and conflicting reports, created in part by a series of tweets from the university warning that there was an "active shooter" on campus and that students should "run, hide, fight." The warning was prompted by what turned out to be police gunfire.

Numerous police vehicles and ambulances converged on the 60,000-student campus, and authorities blocked off roads as students barricaded themselves inside offices and classrooms, piling chairs and desks in front of doors, before getting the all-clear an hour and a half later.

Nicholas Flores grieves during an attack at Ohio State on Monday in Columbus. ADAM CAIRNS/COLUMBUS DISPATCH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ohio State Police Chief Craig Stone said that the assailant deliberately drove his small grey Honda over a curb outside an engineering classroom building and then began knifing people. A campus officer who happened to be nearby because of a gas leak arrived on the scene and shot the driver in less than a minute, Stone said.

Asked at a news conference whether authorities were considering the possibility it was a terrorist act, Columbus Police Chief Kim Jacobs said: "I think we have to consider that it is."

Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, said that while the bloodshed is still under investigation, it "bears all of the hallmarks of a terror attack carried out by someone who may have been self-radicalized."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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JAPAN SOMETHING FISHY An amusement park in Japan sparked an uproar after it displayed about 5,000 dead fish in the ice at a skating rink, forcing the park to close the attraction. About 25 different kinds of fish could be seen under the 250-metre-long ice circuit. The park in of Kitakyushu opened the "Ice Aquarium" as an "attraction never heard about." FACEBOOK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Tuesday, November 29, 2016

PAUL WELLS ON WHAT CASTRO LEFT BEHIND

Canadians not named Trudeau will probably continue to watch Cuba as we have for decades, unsure or divided in our response.

I want to talk about the rest of Canada's weird, hesitant relationship with Cuba. But first, since I'm just getting to it now, a few words about Justin Trudeau and Fidel Castro.

We haven't seen Justin Trudeau mourn like this since his dad died. In expressing his "deep sorrow" at the death of Castro, a "larger than life" figure whom Trudeau lauded as "a legendary orator."

Sorry, let's just pause right there. Legendary orator? On Sept. 26, 1960, Castro addressed the United Nations General Assembly for four and a half hours, a record unchallenged to this day in the most boring room on Earth. In 1998 in Havana he spoke for seven and a half hours. Calling Castro a great orator is like calling porn legend Ron Jeremy a romantic: It confuses volume with quality.

Onward. Trudeau lauded Castro's "tremendous dedication and love for the Cuban people," whose speech and dietary protein Castro rationed, by law, for decades. I guess it was tough love.

To be sure, Trudeau balanced his praise with criticism. "During Castro's rule, thousands of Cubans were incarcerated in abysmal prisons, thousands more were harassed and intimidated, and entire generations were denied basic political freedoms," the prime minister wrote. Just kidding! No, that last quote isn't from Justin Trudeau at all. It's from Human Rights Watch. As for the PM, in a communiqué overflowing with praise for Castro, he could find room for only one word about the Cuban dictator's human-rights record: "controversial."

Probably most Canadians have long known that Cubans don't have the government we would want for them.

Nor can the PM's defenders long sustain the notion that his statement must have been penned by some careless lackey in the PMO. No, the communiqué is too solidly in line with the entire Trudeau family's record on the man to be anything but an honest reflection of Justin Trudeau's thought.

Castro was a pallbearer at Pierre Trudeau's funeral. The PM's brother Alexandre Trudeau wrote in the Toronto Star a decade ago that Castro was "something of a superman," whose "intellect is one of the most broad and complete that can be found." Alexandre Trudeau wrote that he "grew up knowing that Fidel Castro had a special place among my family's friends," even if ordinary Cubans "do occasionally complain, often as an adolescent might complain about a too strict and demanding father."

One notes family similarities in prose style.

So a prime minister who claims to prize evidence-based policy was caught putting family connections ahead of the exhaustively documented abuses of a man whose death marks a crucial step in his own people's long-delayed march toward freedom.

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP Former prime minister Pierre Trudeau looks on as Cuban President Fidel Castro gestures during a visit to a Havana in 1976 THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

But the rest of us — we cold and bashful Canadians — will probably continue to watch Cuba as we have for decades, unsure or divided in our response to events in the land Fidel Castro leaves behind.

Exhibit A in the theatre of ambivalence is Justin Trudeau's predecessor. Stephen Harper met Raul Castro, Fidel's brother and still the president of Cuba, only 19 months ago, attending what would be Harper's last Summit of the Americas in Panama City. The two men sat smiling awkwardly at each other in hard-backed chairs around a little table.

But reporters covering the summit had to find the photo on the website of Granma, the official Cuban Communist newspaper. Canadian reporters weren't told of the meeting by Harper's staff until they found proof of it on the Castro family's propaganda website.

At his summit-closing news conference, Harper said that for Canada and Cuba, "we're at a point where engagement is more likely to lead us to where we want to go than continued isolation." He said he and Raul Castro had discussed the two nations' "important and long-standing relationship. It's a political relationship, a tourist relationship and commercial relationship to some degree — one that we want to expand."

True, Harper managed to resist marvelling at Castro's charm, oratorical skill, grasp of physics or deep-diving skills, further evidence, if any were needed, that he's no Trudeau.

But Harper's meeting with Cuba's president — only three years after he had blocked Cuban participation at the previous Summit of the Americas — was of a piece with his decision to let Canada be the venue for crucial secret meetings between the Castro regime and the Obama administration.

In both cases, Harper was more eager to get along with the Cubans than to be seen getting along with them.

Why advertise the thaw? A million Canadians a year visit Cuba to enjoy gorgeous beaches and groaning buffets at all-inclusive resorts from which most Cubans remain banned. One winter more than a decade ago, I was one of them. But millions more refuse, even today, to make the trip, believing each dollar they spent would help prop up a corrupt regime.

Probably most Canadians not named Trudeau have long known that Cubans did not have the government Canadians would want for them — and, indeed, not the government Cubans would choose, were they granted the freedom to change their minds about the revolution. But that knowledge doesn't tell us which mix of engagement and isolation is wisest.

Having blown some political capital by saying what he thinks, Trudeau is now going to skip Fidel's funeral. It's a retreat to ambivalence dictated by a public outcry that must have astonished the prime minister, who grew up with a photo of Fidel Castro in his family's home and thought, perhaps, that everybody did.

Paul Wells is a national affairs columnist for the Toronto Star.

2016 standards hard for heroes to meet

INSIDE THE PERIMETER

Shannon VanRaes

Growing up, I admired women like Lucy Maud Montgomery, Pauline Johnson, Nellie Bly, Mary Ann Cary, Roberta Bondar and Angela Lansbury.

And of course, Nellie McClung.

The daughter of an immigrant farmer and illiterate until the age of 10, McClung somehow managed to become a successful author, politician and activist. She advocated for equality in divorce, pushed for universal dental and health care for children, fought for improved worker safety, mother's allowance and property rights for married women — all while raising five children.

However, McClung is best known as a feminist who fought to extend suffrage to women before becoming one of the Famous Five, which launched a legal challenge to have women recognized as people under Canadian law.

McClung was also a believer in eugenics, proposing sterilization for the "simple-minded."

It is for this reason, some have speculated, that McClung was not short-listed to become the first Canadian woman featured on our currency, despite being the favourite choice in online polls.

But the decision is more a sign of the times and less of a nod to history.

Today, we judge historical figures not by the degree to which they shaped our world — be it for better or worse — but rather by how well they fit our modern values.

And no group is more tightly bound by the expectation than women. The irony is that while pushing to recognize the historic limitations faced by wide swaths of our citizens and repair the damage inequality has done to our society, we are also forcing them to account posthumously for the values of their generation in a way that male historical figures rarely have to.

Take for example Canada's eighth prime minister, Sir Robert Borden, a man who has graced Canada's $100 bill since 1976. Despite having leveraged racism and anti-immigrant sentiment to win the 1911 election — he used the slogan "A White Canada" in British Columbia — Borden has rarely been seen as a divisive figure and there is no groundswell of momentum to strip his face from our currency.

Likewise, Sir John A. Macdonald is featured on the $10 bill despite having authorized the execution of Metis leader Louis Riel.

That's because in reality history is rarely defined by those who are purely good or evil. History is shaped one day at a time by real people, influenced, curtailed and motivated by the times they live in. To deny that complexity is to miss opportunities for critical thought and constructive change.

It's a debate heightened by the sad reality that after 150 years as country, the government's attempt to add balance to the historical record consists of pitting women against each other to fill a token position on a banknote. No one woman can represent Canada's history, nor should any one woman be expected to.

To me, the solution is clear: for the next 150 years only women should be featured on money, all of it. Then we can discuss a 50-50 arrangement.

That's just my two cents.

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INTERIOR DESIGN

Create a serene mood in your home to get away from it all

Megan Haynes
For Torstar News Service

Cosy like the Danes

• Hygge (HUE-geh or HOO-geh) is all about creating a cosy and comfortable environment

There's no such thing as too many candles, says Arne Nordtorp, a Denmark-born Toronto resident, and Danish design aficionado. Soft lighting is key to any happy home. So are cosy blankets and beautiful furniture.

"A lot of people think Danish design is stark and cold, but when you get to the DNA, it's really warm and colourful," says Nordtorp, who owns the Danish furniture and design store Torp.

"The space itself needs to be beautiful because when you're in a beautiful space it really makes you feel more comfortable."

It's a philosophy called hygge, and Danes live by it. The goal is to create an atmosphere that encourages people to "spend time together doing almost nothing at all," Nordtorp says.

Hygge (pronounced HUE-geh or HOO-geh, depending on whom you ask) is all about creating a cosy and comfortable environment, says University of B.C. Danish culture and language lecturer Jens Monrad. And the ideology is currently sweeping the globe, he says.

While the trend is just starting to bubble to the surface in Canada, the current state of social and political affairs might lead to a surge in popularity here, too.

The old Norse term originally meant "to think of caring for someone or something," Monrad says.

In the mid-1800s — when Denmark was replete with political and civil unrest — the word resurfaced in literature, usually around themes of families coming together to create a comforting environment.

Nikolaj Grundtvig, founder of the Danish People's Church, later equated the concept of creating a cosy and quiet comforting home environment to a churchlike experience, and the philosophy really took off.

"He made the gates of paradise sound like something out of Ikea's Christmas catalogue," says Monrad.

Anytime there was civic unrest, such as during the Nazi occupation in the Second World War, hygge resurfaced until it just became part of everyday life in Denmark, he says.

"It is why in a modern context, (hygge) has connotations of something overly escapist, perhaps a little bit self-satisfied."

With the continued economic slump, global safety concerns, Brexit, Trump — there's never been a better time to create that welcoming and comfortable home environment, Monrad says.

But, he adds, hygge is more than just escaping the harsh realities of the world in a candlelit, blanket-covered room. To live a truly hyggeligt life, it's about fostering a closeness and comfort with friends and family.

CUDDLE UP

Canadian winters are cold and long. Here are three ways to get comfy.

Foods

Bowls of sweets are common in Danish households as are rich, flaky pastries. Pick up Hoj Snegl (cinnamon roll buns), Smakager (cookies) or Smorrebrod (savoury, buttery open-faced sandwiches common at group gatherings) to complete your table.

Furniture

Since the dinner table is such an important part of the hygge experience, Denmark-born Arne Nordtorp says a beautiful table, such as the Crosslegged Table (Wegner and Holst Pedersen, $5,092), will invite guests to linger.

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The mother of all double standards

VASECTOMIES

Permanent birth control access unequal among genders

Sofi Papamarko
For Torstar News Service

Andy Prosserman, 31, commemorates his recent vasectomy with a celebratory photo shoot.
PHOTOS BY ANGELINA COCCIMIGLIO/ WWW.BLOG.ACOCCI.COM

Andy Prosserman will never be a father — and he couldn't be more delighted.

The 31-year-old Torontonian commemorated his recent vasectomy with a celebratory photo shoot. In one photo, he tenderly cradles a head of kale like a green, leafy infant. In others, he clutches a bottle of scotch, a Nintendo controller, and his Canadian passport — all things he'll have time to enjoy in the absence of parental responsibilities.

"I've known I didn't want to be a father as far back as I can remember," says Prosserman. "I'd thought about getting a vasectomy when I was in my early 20s. I chose not to do it at that point because I knew things could change and that it would've been irresponsible to do it that young, but I've always assumed I'd do it at some point. And here we are."

Unlike Prosserman, Cam Nursall came to this realization gradually.

"I have zero paternal instinct," says the 25-year-old, currently in consultation for a vasectomy. "I want to travel, I want to open a small brewery, I want to ride across the continent on my motorcycle, and kids just don't fit into that."

The choice about whether or not to have children is among the most important we make. If parenthood is ultimately not for us, there are myriad options available to us, including permanent sterilization.

But young people's choices about their own bodies and futures aren't always taken seriously — especially the choices of young women.

Samantha Bleiziffer, 27, is certain she does not want to be a mother and would get a tubal ligation if she could.

> "I don't think it's selfish to know what I want from my life."
> Samantha Bleiziffer

"I can't even seem to find a doctor who will sit down and discuss the options with me, like an adult with autonomy over what happens to her body," says Bleiziffer.

"I first tried talking to my family doctor about it when I was 25, because I wanted information on the process and the risks. I was very quickly denied the conversation. My next attempt was at 26, where the doctor at a private women's health clinic denied me the same information and conversation."

Compare this with Prosserman's experience — his vasectomy took place two months after putting in an initial request with his GP.

Tubal ligations are irreversible and more invasive than vasectomies, but this informal double standard is frustrating for young Canadian women certain of their decision.

The current summary guidelines from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) state: "Before providing permanent contraception, women should be counselled on the risks of the procedure, the risk of regret, and alternative contraceptive methods... Informed consent must be obtained."

Despite this, several women I've spoken to were stonewalled by health-care providers when requesting information on tubal ligations.

Physicians seem especially reluctant to offer it to women in their 20s, like Bleiziffer.

One of the more common criticisms women face is that choosing not to have children makes them selfish.

"I don't think it's selfish to know what I want from my life, and if not being a mother is a part of that plan, it truly doesn't concern anybody but me and my partner," Bleiziffer says.

"I don't critique anybody's choice to procreate and have kids. All I want is the same respect for my choice."

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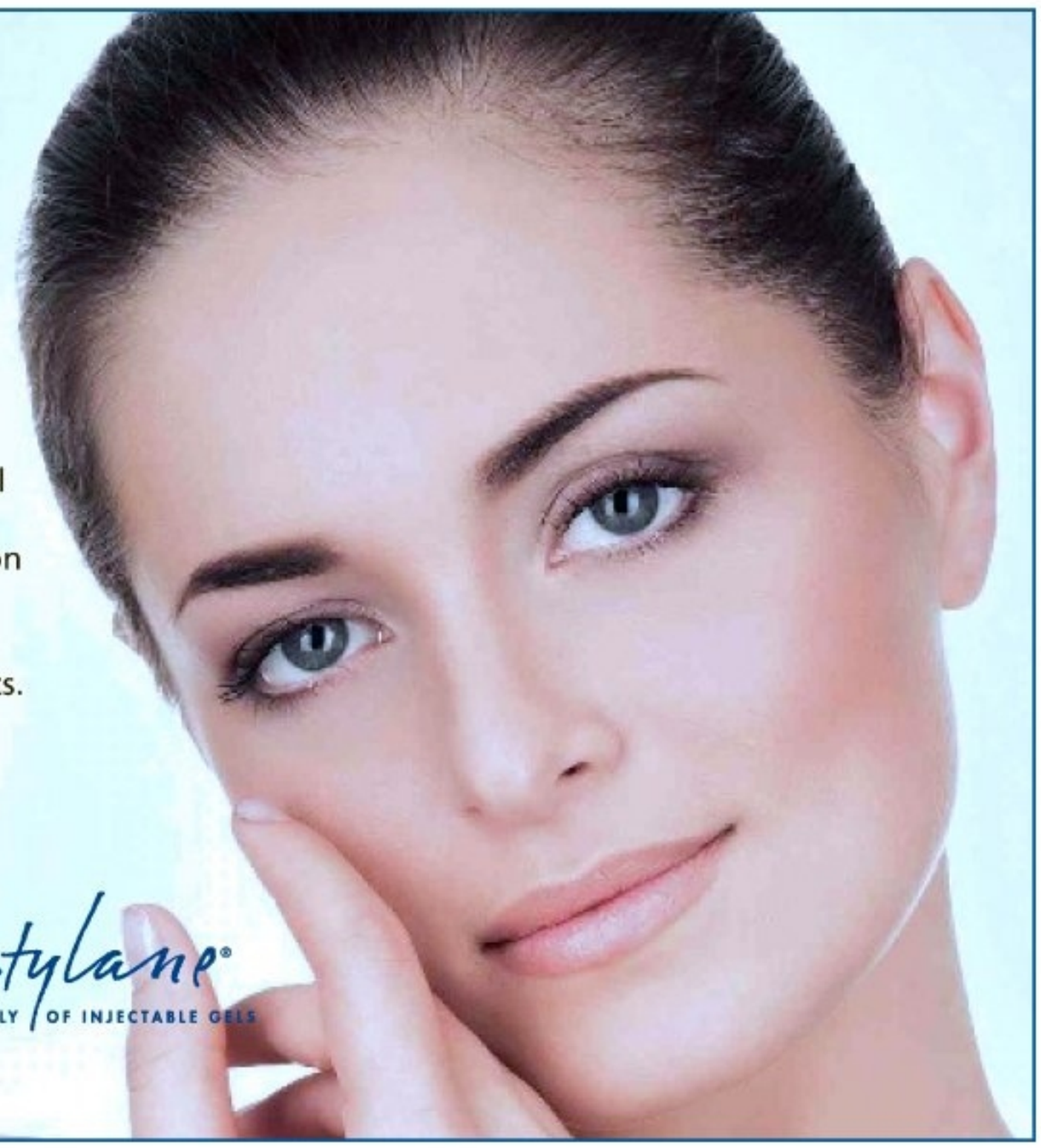

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"If Brazil depends only on Neymar there will be a problem with Brazil, not with Neymar": Brazil coach Tite on the importance of a team-first mentality

Golfing world riveted by return of fallen idol Woods

GOLF

Several injuries have kept Tiger out, played last in August 2015

Tiger Woods has gone through two back surgeries since he last played a golf tournament 15 months ago. He had another back surgery that knocked him out of the Masters for the first time in 2014. He had four knee surgeries before that.

None of that matters to Ernie Els when Woods returns to competition this week. Els is more curious about what's going on in his head.

"The talent's there. It's been proven. It doesn't go away," Els said. "It's what you think of yourself. We look at this great player, but he's not seeing the same stuff in his own mind. A lot of us are like that. When you've achieved as much as he has it's a shock to the system not to play as good as you have been."

Els, perhaps more than any other player, has a deep golfing connection with Woods.

He was the player Woods sought out 20 years ago at Royal Lytham & St. Annes when deciding whether to turn pro. They had so many meaningful battles, and Woods almost always got the better of him. Els was runner-up to Woods seven times, the most of any player.

Tiger Woods has won 14 majors and 79 times on the PGA Tour. STREETER LECKA/GETTY IMAGES

Els designed the Albany golf course where Woods comes back from the longest layoff of his career on Thursday. He plans to be in the Bahamas, and he is as eager as anyone else to see how a guy who won 79 times on the PGA Tour stacks up against a generation that grew up in awe of how Woods played golf.

The Hero World Challenge is a holiday tournament with an 18-man field and no cut. Even so, it commands as much attention as any tournament this year. Woods has been a star attraction his entire career, and the appetite is even stronger after an absence that dates to Aug. 23, 2015.

"I can't wait to watch, either, just to see him play," Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III said. "The last time I saw him play, I won. It's hard to believe it's been that long."

Woods already has had one false start. He signed up to play the Safeway Open, only to pull out three days later because he said he felt "vulnerable." That followed a week as assistant captain at the Ryder Cup, and cramming in practice the week before with results that made him want to wait.

Love won the Wyndham Championship last year in August at age 51, and it could easily have served as a model for Woods — a power player no longer in his prime, not among the biggest hitters anymore, but with enough experience and talent to find a way to score and to win.

"It has to motivate him that Vijay Singh is lasting until 53, that Ernie is still competitive, that Davis is still competitive," Love said. "He knows Jack Nicklaus won the Masters in 1986 playing part-time. He knows what everybody has done. I know he's working hard not to come back and be average. He wants to come back and win again."

That might be expecting too much, way too soon. No other player has ever faced so much scrutiny, especially now.

"I won't be able to turn the TV on, or the radio on, or look at my phone without knowing what he shot," Jim Furyk said. "The expectations are so high. Every pitch shot, every putt, every three-footer, it's not under public scrutiny like he has."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAST VICTORY

Woods hasn't won a tournament since his seven-shot victory in the Bridgestone Invitational in 2013, the year he won five times and was PGA Tour player of the year.

He hasn't had a serious chance at winning since his tournament three years ago at Sherwood Country Club. Zach Johnson holed a wedge from the drop zone to force a playoff, and won when Woods missed a five-foot putt in the playoff.

IN BRIEF

104th Grey Cup draws 10 million viewers on TV

The Ottawa Redblacks' 39-33 overtime victory over the Calgary Stampeders in the 104th Grey Cup on Sunday drew 10 million unique viewers, according to TSN.

The network stated in a release that an average audience of 3.9 million viewers tuned in to TSN (3.6 million) and RDS (254,000) according to preliminary overnight data from Numeris. Overall, the total reach grew three per cent compared to last year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Brady's knee acting up

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady says his injured knee feels better than it did after the team's last game.

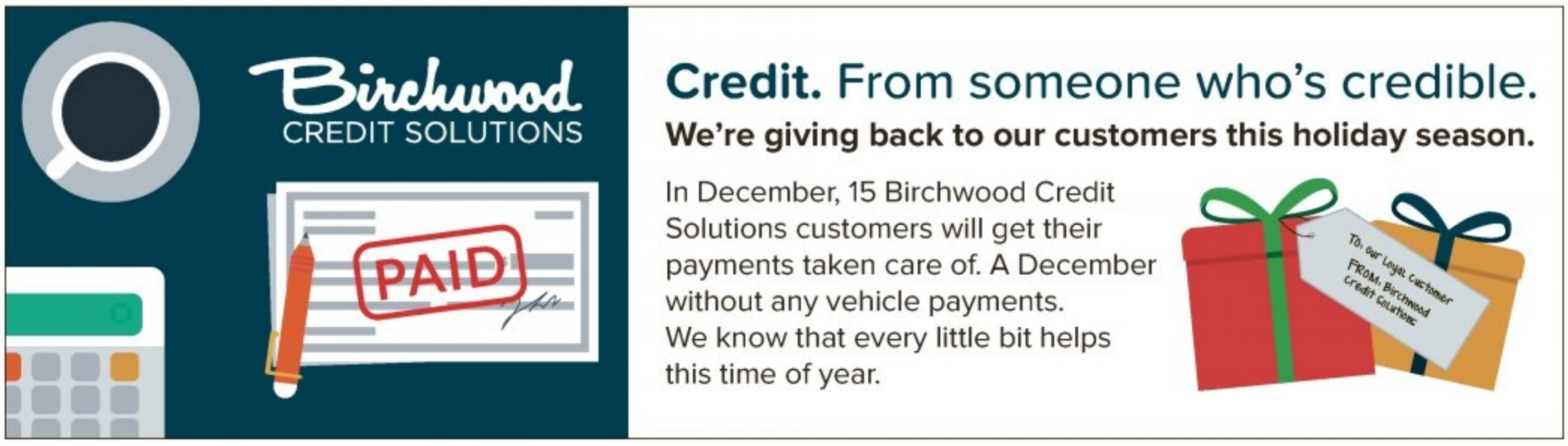
A day after leading New England to a 22-17 win over the New York Jets, Brady said the knee was acting up during the game. But he said he hopes it will be better on Sunday, when the Patriots play the Los Angeles Rams.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baseball representatives to meet about new CBA

Negotiators for baseball players and owners are meeting this week in Irving, Texas, in an attempt to reach agreement on a collective bargaining agreement to replace the five-year contract that expires Thursday. After eight work stoppages from 1972-95, baseball has had 21 years of labour peace.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Cheesy French Onion Soup

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

The debate should be over the cheese to crouton ratio in this pub favourite.

Ready in 30 minutes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 2 onions , thinly sliced
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp flour
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 cups beef stock
- half a stick of baguette
- 1 cup grated Gruyère and Parmesan mixed

Directions

1. In a Dutch oven, melt butter and toss onion slices, garlic, sugar, thyme and pinch of salt and pepper. Cook over medium low heat for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently, until onions soften.

2. Sprinkle the flour over the onion mixture and stir. Add the vinegar and a cup of stock. Stir well, scraping the bottom of the pot to deglaze. Add the rest of the stock and simmer for 10 minutes.

3. Turn your oven onto broil. Cut bread into 1-inch thick slices. Cut as many slices as bowls of soup you'll be serving. Lay them on a cookie sheet and put a layer of the cheese mix on each piece. Broil in oven until cheese melts and bread is golden brown.

4. Remove bread from oven and cut into pieces. Ladle the soup into bowls and top with a slice of bread's worth of croutons.

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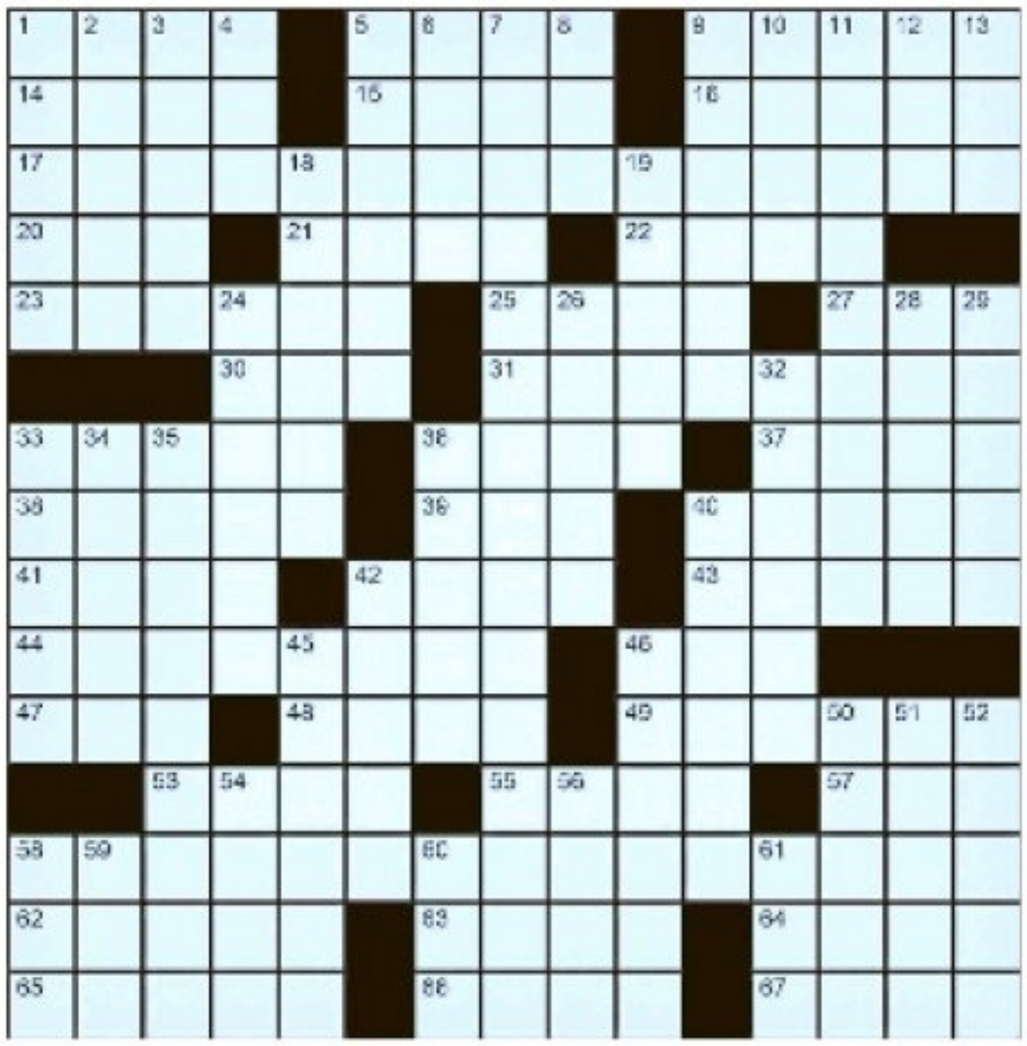
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Club drink
5. Abundant
9. Eclipse variety
14. Above
15. Adjoin
16. Cartoon style of Japan
17. Like a movie or TV production with an East Coast setting, maybe: 3 wds.
20. Carpenter _
21. Conceal
22. Intensely dislike
23. Harvester
25. Space: Primordial matter
27. Li'l photo taker
30. Entries
31. Item worn under a sheer blouse
33. Newfoundland's _ Banks
36. Novembre, par exemple
37. Rapper, T-_
38. Sloughs off, States-style
39. Every
40. Chatters
41. X-_ knife
42. NBC personality Ms. Kotb
43. Milo of "Romeo and Juliet" (1968)
44. Wintertime hazard: 2 wds.
46. "The _ of Us" (1994)
47. Mr. David of "Curb Your Enthusiasm", to pals
48. Put on _ _ (Complete the suit look)
49. Ludicrous
53. South's opposite ...as a typo
55. Singer sampled on Eminem's "Stan"
57. Philosopher, _-tzu
58. Realm for Canadian food brands Clover Leaf and Brunswick: 2 wds.
62. 'Weird Al' Yankovic spoof hit: 2 wds.
63. Indigo dye
64. Bark's coveree
65. Rosebud, and others
66. Ms. Hudson
67. Wool

DOWN
1. Up to now: 2 wds.
2. Sheep-like
3. Northwest Territories... Mackenzie _
4. Fortify
5. Devices for detecting
6. 'Sacred' bird of ancient Egypt
7. 1989 chart-topper for American rapper Tone-Loc: 3 wds.
8. Shakespearean suffix
9. Submarine meat layer
10. Taking action: 2 wds.
11. Pro to counsel with about goals and challenges: 2 wds.
12. "I _ _ Thief" (1934) starring Mary Astor
13. Pal to Fido or Rover
18. Alters the text
19. "Pardon me..." [pl.]
24. Patchy-coated horses
26. "Dancing with the Stars" alum Ms. Ali
28. Similar
29. High IQ society
32. Cramps
33. Google service
34. Mo _ (Correspondent on CBS' "Sunday Morning")
35. Interchange
36. New Zealand language
40. BC: Community on Cowichan Lake
42. _-_-trot
45. Futuristic cards at the carnival
46. Aerosmith: "Back in the _"
50. Ne plus _ (Perfection)
51. Less grilled at the steakhouse
52. Respected group member
54. Wizard _ _ (Comic strip)
56. 'A.' of Vivica A. Fox or 'J.' of Michael J. Fox, briefly
58. The Outsiders author Ms. Hinton's
59. 'Ether' ender
60. Fargo, North _.
61. Farm enclosure

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
An unexpected flirtation with a boss or someone in authority might occur today. Certainly, right out of the blue, people in power are impressed with you for some reason!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Unexpected opportunities to travel might fall into your lap today. Act quickly, because this window of opportunity will be brief. Flirtations with someone different also might excite you.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Surprise gifts, goodies and favors from others can come your way today. If this happens, say "yes" — quickly! Keep your pockets open

Cancer June 22 - July 23
A friend or partner might please you in an unexpected way today. He or she might even sweep you off your feet. Be open to whatever happens.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Unexpected praise and possibly a raise will come your way at work today. For some reason, people admire you. Just say, "Thank you!" This is your good fortune.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
A surprise invitation to a fun event will please you today. Likewise, an unexpected flirtation might amaze you. Sports events will have unexpected results. Meanwhile, because this is a mildly accident-prone day for your kids, be vigilant.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You might unexpectedly entertain at home today, or you might buy something beautiful for your home. Real-estate opportunities look good as well.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is an enjoyable, exciting day because you're meeting new people and seeing new places. You're also full of clever, bright new ideas! It's a strong day for writers, salespeople, actors and teachers.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Many of you will see ways to boost your income today or to make money down the road. Trust your moneymaking ideas. (You might even get a raise.)

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
This is an exciting, social day for you! You're ready for adventure and something different, which is why you are attracted to people who are unusual. Stay flexible today.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Secrets might be revealed today. Something unexpected is taking place behind the scenes. Because you sense this, you feel a bit restless and excited.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You might meet someone new today who is bohemian or avant-garde. Or perhaps someone you already know will do something that completely amazes you!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

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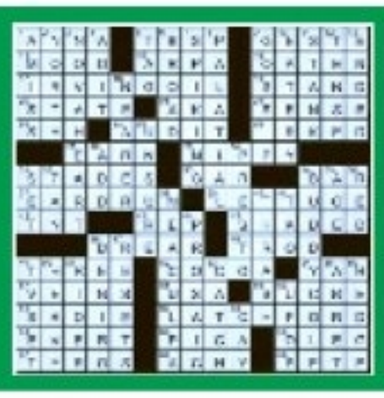

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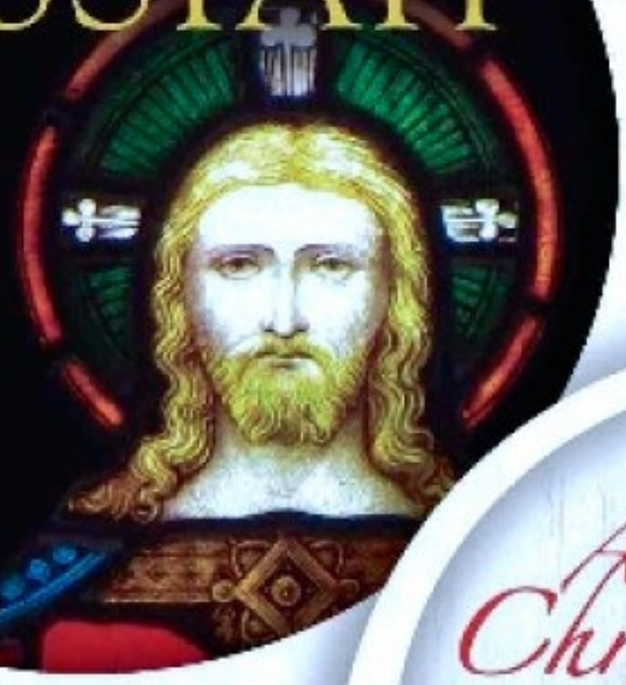
'Tis the season for a little music!

HANDEL'S
MESSIAH



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